

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 03542 201618Z

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 IO-13 /055 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6841

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR ELAB TS LY

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN WORKER IMMIGRATION TO LIBYA

REFUX A) TUNIS 3475, B) TRIPOLI 656

1. GOT OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR WORKER EMIGRATION HAVE ADVISED US THAT PROGRAMS FOR EXPORT OF TUNISIAN WORKERS TO LIBYA HAVE RESUMED. PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IN OPERATION FOR SEVERAL MONTHS AND REACHED LEVEL OF 1300 WORKERS IN APRIL. OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE AND ARE PLEASED THAT THE MISTREATMENT OF TUNISIANS BY LIBYAN AUTHORITIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO POOR BILATERAL RELATIONS IN MID-1976 HAS CEASED. MOST OF THESE WORKERS ARE EMPLOYED IN CONSTRUCTION AND AGRICULTURE, THE OCCUPATIONS TRADITIONALLY TAKEN BY THE MAJORITY OF TUNISIAN EMIGRANT WORKERS IN LIBYA.

2. ACCORDING TO GOT OFFICIALS COLONEL QADHAFI HAS AGREED TO READMIT TUNISIAN WORKERS (AFTER HAVING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 TUNIS 03542 201618Z

EXPELLED ABOUT 14,000 LAST YEAR IN ORDER TO WORSEN UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS IN TUNISIA) BECAUSE OF PRESSING ECONOMIC NEED FOR THEIR SERVICES. LIBYANS ARE REPORTEDLY LESS SATISFIED WITH WORKERS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES AND FIND TUNISIANS TO BE THE MOST ADAPTABLE TO LIBYAN WORK CLIMATE. TUNISIANS APPARENTLY ENJOY WORKING IN LIBYA BECAUSE IT IS CLOSE TO HOME, LIBYAN ARABIC IS SIMILAR

TO THE TUNISIAN DIALECT AND THE PAY IS GOOD (RATES ARE
GENERALLY TRIPLE OF WAGES IN TUNISIA).

3. THE NUMBER OF TUNISIAN WORKERS IN LIBYA COULD SOON
REACH THE LEVEL OF 45,000 WHERE IT STOOD IN MARCH 1976
WHEN QADHAFI INITIATED THE EXPULSIONS. WHILE A LARGE
POOL OF UNSKILLED AND SEMI-SKILLED LABOR IS STILL AVAILABLE
IN TUNISIA FOR EXPORT TO LIBYA, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT
TUNISIANS COULD REPLACE A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF ANY
OF THE MORE SKILLED FOREIGNERS NOW WORKING IN LIBYA.
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Message Attributes

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